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may have occasionally been inquired into, and in some instances corrected by the court of chancery, appear to us to require a more efficient and particular superintendence. The masters salary for both schools, amounting to 180*l.* per annum, has been received for thirteen years by a gentleman who never taught a single scholar in either; and though there is no reason to apprehend any mismanagement of the funds by the present agent, and though the last lettings of the lands appears to have been conducted with proper attention, we are of opinion that the present situation of the concerns of this charity, under the direction of the court of chancery (before which they were first brought by an information filed in the year 1735, and in which court they are still, as already stated, a perpetual cause) is not favourable to an active and sufficient controul over the conduct either of the agent or the masters, and other persons employed in the schools.

*Council Chm. July 23, 1807.*

(Signed) W. ARMAGH. (L.S.)  
 GEO. HALL PROVOST. (L.S.)  
 JAS. VERSCHOYLE, Dean of  
 St. Patrick's (L.S.)  
 JAS. WHITELAW. (L.S.)  
 WILLIAM DISNEY. (L.S.)  
 R. L. EDGEWORTH. (L.S.)

(A correct copy.)

J. CORNEILLE, Sec. to the Commissioners.

*To his Grace Charles Duke of Richmond and Lenox, lord lieutenant general and general governor of Ireland, &c.*

*The third Report of the Commissioners for inquiring into the state of all Schools on public or charitable foundations in Ireland.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

**W** E the undersigned commissioners for inquiring into the several funds and revenues granted for the purposes of education, and into the state and condition of all schools on public and charitable foundations in Ireland, have thought it necessary to prefix to our report upon the present state of "the Protestant charter schools," some account of the origin, object, and progress of those schools, as well as of their conduct and management,

which we therefore beg leave to submit to your grace in the following statement:

The charter for establishing Protestant schools in Ireland, was granted by his late Majesty, George the second, in the year 1733, on the petition of the principal nobility, clergy and gentry of Ireland, setting forth the gross ignorance, disaffection and want of civilization that prevailed among the Popish inhabitants, who in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, were stated as far exceeding the Protestants in number; and praying the incorporation of a society for establishing and maintaining a sufficient number of English Protestant schools in proper situations, as one of the most effectual means of converting and civilizing the Irish natives; and in which the children of the poor might be instructed *gratis* in the English tongue, and the fundamental principles of true religion and loyalty. The charter, after reciting the above particulars, proceeds to nominate and appoint the persons who are to compose a society incorporated for erecting, maintaining and supporting, in such places as they shall judge to be most convenient and necessary, such and so many English Protestant schools as they shall think proper, with power to appoint fit persons to be school-masters and school-mistresses of the same, who shall instruct the children of the Popish and other poor natives in the English tongue, in the principles of the Protestant religion, in reading, writing and arithmetic, and such other parts of learning as to the society shall seem meet, and bring them up in virtue and industry, and cause them to be instructed in husbandry and housewifery, or in trades or manufactures, or other manual occupations; for which the society are to provide them with all necessary utensils and materials, as also with bibles and common prayer books, and other proper books, and to give them encouragements by providing clothes, diet, and lodging, for such of them as to the society shall seem meet, until they shall judge them fit to be put out to trades or services, or other employments; and to allow the masters and mistresses such yearly wages or

salaries as shall seem reasonable, together with the benefit of school-houses, dwelling-houses, gardens, fields, and the other accommodations for the purposes aforesaid: It further directs that a committee of fifteen members of the society, chosen annually, shall carry into execution all orders, rules and directions made at the general meetings, to be held quarterly or oftener; and provides for the admission of new members into the society, viz. such as being Protestants shall become subscribers or benefactors to the funds thereof. And for enabling the society to carry these objects into effect, it makes them and their successors for ever capable of receiving and enjoying lands, rents, annuities, and other hereditaments, not exceeding the clear yearly value of two thousand pounds, and to take and receive any sums of money, goods, or chattels that shall be given or bequeathed to them by any persons or bodies corporate who shall be capable of making such gifts or bequests.

The charter was opened the 6th of February 1733-4 in the council chamber of the castle of Dublin, in the presence of the Duke of Dorset, then lord lieutenant of Ireland, and many of the principal nobility, gentry, and clergy; and a subscription was immediately entered into, and afterwards carried on both in England and Ireland, by which the society was enabled to found one school in the course of the following year; it was placed at Castle-dermot, in the county of Kildare, in acknowledgment of the munificence of the then Earl of Kildare, who, in addition to his original subscription of five hundred pounds, engaged to endow it with a grant of twenty acres of land. Three other schools were founded in the year 1735, one in 1736, and three in 1737. In fixing on the sites of these and of their other schools in general, the society appears to have been determined partly by the presumed necessity for them in very Popish districts, and partly by the offers of Protestant landholders to endow them with lands, not only for building on, but for the maintenance and support of the schools, and to afford opportunities for instructing and exercising the boys in

agriculture and gardening. Such endowments were in general made by leases renewable for ever, or on very long tenures, and at very low rents (on the condition however of reverting to the grantors and their heirs, if the schools should be discontinued, or not kept up to the original establishment); and the lands annexed to each school are held under the society by the masters at an advanced rent, but usually far below the real value, so as to form a considerable part of their income. The Protestant gentry and clergy in the neighbourhood of each school usually contributed to its support by annual subscriptions; the average of these and other subscriptions for the first four years (which, with the profit rents already mentioned, were then the only funds of the society) amounted to about sixteen hundred pounds per annum. Of this sum, the greater part was raised in England, where a society was formed for the purpose of procuring such contributions, and which subsisted for many years, under the name of "The Corresponding Society."—In the year 1738, his Majesty, George the second, having on an address from the society been graciously pleased to augment its funds by the grant of one thousand pounds, which was afterwards continued annually; six additional schools were erected, with similar encouragement and support from those on whose estates or in whose neighbourhood they were placed: and other liberal offers and contributions continuing to be annually made to the society, they were enabled in the next nine years to establish as many new schools.

In the year 1740, the society became possessed of their first landed estate, devised to them by the honourable Mrs. Anne Hamilton, for founding a school at Dundalk, and situated in the county of Down; it was then let for thirty-five pounds nineteen shillings and six pence, but has since risen to two hundred and seventy-six pounds per annum. In the year 1747, the produce of the duty on hawkers and pedlars was granted by parliament to the society, amounting, on an average of the next forty years, to eleven hundred and fifty pounds per annum. By this bounty of parliament, the

society was enabled to erect fourteen new schools in the next three years. And in 1751 the Duke of Dorset then again lord lieutenant, having recommended the charter schools in his speech on the opening of the session of parliament, the sum of five thousand pounds was granted to the society on a petition of the House of Commons to his Majesty; in consequence of which, seven additional schools were established in the three following years. From that time to the present, the society have continued to receive parliamentary grants every session, which indeed became necessary from the great increase of their establishments. The sums granted have usually varied with the exigencies of the society; in the first ten years, the average of them amounted to about three thousand five hundred pounds per annum; in the next ten, to about five thousand eight hundred and twenty pounds; in the next, to about six thousand one hundred pounds; in the next, to above nine thousand pounds; in the next, to eleven thousand eight hundred and fifty pounds; and in the last seven, to near twenty thousand pounds per annum. One reason for this great increase in the last twenty years is, that about the year 1787, the duty on hawkers and pedlars became wholly unproductive; and the amount of annual subscriptions had then, and has since declined very considerably; and in the year 1794, on the adoption of new regulations in the management of the treasury in Ireland, his Majesty's bounty of one thousand pounds per annum being discontinued, the parliamentary grant was augmented, as a compensation to the society. In the year 1758, there was an extraordinary grant of five thousand pounds (included in the average of the first ten years) for erecting four provincial nurseries for the reception of children below the age of admission into the schools, for the maintenance of which, parliament was in some degree pledged, by thus sanctioning and directing establishments for which no other provision existed; and the grants were accordingly larger from the time these nurseries were opened; they were designed to contain one hundred children each, and

have usually their full complement. In the same year, 1758, the society having become possessed of lands in the county of Westmeath, and other property bequeathed to them by the reverend William Wilson, for founding a charter school in that county, did accordingly establish one on the lands so devised, the clear rents of which amount at present to one hundred and ninety-one pounds seventeen shillings and six pence per annum. In the year 1760, the estates of the late earl of Ranelagh, which had been devised by him for the support of charity schools at Roscommon and Athlone, were vested in the society by act of parliament; and two schools were in a short time accordingly established at those places, into which, agreeably to the will of lord Ranelagh, the children of Protestants only are admitted. The rental of these estates amounts at present to one thousand seven hundred and forty-eight pounds two shillings and six pence. In the year 1763, doctor Richard Pococke, bishop of Ossory, bequeathed a considerable estate both real and personal to the incorporated society, for founding a weaving school near Kilkenny, for Papist boys only, to be educated in the Protestant religion, which school was accordingly established, and continues to be supported out of said bequest; the real estate produces at this time eight hundred and forty-six pounds nine shillings and four pence halfpenny, and is more than sufficient for the maintenance of the present establishment; so that there is now an accumulation of this fund, of above sixteen hundred pounds in the hands of the society. In the year 1764, the late Chidley Coote, esquire, devised an estate in the county of Limerick to the society, which is let at present for 280*l.* per annum. Since that time, there have been four additional schools erected out of the general funds of the society: one at Castlebar, in 1768; one at Tarbert; and another at Newmarket, since suppressed; and the school in Baggot-street in the city of Dublin, established in 1804. The total number of schools founded by the society, including the nurseries and those on the Ranelagh

and Pococke foundations, amounted to fifty-eight, and were capable of containing about two thousand seven hundred children. It is certain however that this number was never actually accommodated in them at any one time; and, indeed the entire number of schools never existed together, as several of them had been suppressed, or otherwise discontinued, before the latest of them had been established. This was occasioned generally by the local disadvantages of their situation, and in some instances by the resumption of lands which had been granted for their support. The number of those, of all descriptions, remaining at present, is thirty-nine; in which there appear, by the last returns, to have been two thousand two hundred and fifty-one children.

In the year 1786, the funds of the society were augmented by the estates of the late John Rogerson esq. who had directed in his will that they should be sold, and the purchase money, after paying certain legacies and other bequests, be vested in the incorporated society. It appears, however, that only so much of his estates was sold, as was sufficient for discharging these bequests, and the society obtained possession of the remainder, which produced at that time thirteen hundred and fifty-nine pounds fourteen shillings and one penny per annum, but have since been raised to seventeen hundred and seventy pounds. In 1789, the society succeeded to an estate in the county of Louth, at present producing above three hundred pounds per annum, under the will of the late dean Stewart, dated in the year 1774, which directed that on failure of issue of the immediate devisees, it should be vested in the incorporated society, for the purposes therein expressed. There have been other smaller bequests and donations of lands and rent charges for the support of particular schools, amounting in the whole to about two hundred and thirty-eight pounds per annum; and the profit rent of the lands, held by the several school-masters under the society, amounts to about one hundred and eighty pounds per annum. There is also an annual grant of two hundred and fifty pounds made to the society, by the govern-

ors of Erasmus Smith's schools, for the support of the charter school of Sligo. In the year 1790, a Dutch nobleman, resident in London, Baron Vryhouven, bequeathed to the society a great part of his funded property, amounting to fifty-six thousand six hundred and fifty-six pounds stock in the three per-cent. consols, and producing an interest of about seventeen hundred pounds per annum. And about the same time an unknown benefactor transferred to the society, stock to the amount of forty thousand pounds in the 4-per-cents. producing about sixteen hundred pounds per annum. The entire produce of these several funds and estates bequeathed to, and vested in the incorporated society, for the sole and express purpose of educating poor children in the Protestant religion, and apprenticing them to Protestant masters, amounted in the last year (exclusive of the parliamentary grant) to £9765 9 7 per annum.

*To be continued.*

#### *To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.*

#### OBSERVATIONS ON THE NATURE OF SOILS, WITH THEIR MODE OF IMPROVEMENT.

SIR,

**I** SEND you the following observations on the nature of Soils, with the mode of improving the same, according to the method at present adopted by every intelligent farmer in this country: hoping it may stimulate others of your Correspondents, who are perhaps better versed in the latest discoveries in philosophy, and chemistry, to turn their attention towards this subject; which is of the utmost importance to every practical farmer in the management of their farms; and though it cannot be supposed that every farmer can be a philosopher, or an adept chemist, yet there are none who may not make themselves acquainted with the nature of the soil which they cultivate, relative to its component parts; and by judicious and proper treatment to render it (as far as is in his power) prolific in the production of vegetables of every kind.

In order that some of your readers may the better understand what may